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To: Microsoft ATR,piu@doj.ca.gov@inetgw,attorney.gener...
Date: 12/26/01 3:27pm
Subject: Microsoft settlement

I'm writing to ask you to consider removing all preload contract terms that require only Microsoft operating systems as well as requiring Microsoft to release all information regarding their proprietary file formats and APIs to be as part of any real settlement of their predatory monopoly finding. As it stands now the proposed settlement is worthless and a complete sellout by the USDOJ and does absolutely nothing other than validate their monopoly status and treat it as if it is a natural outcome.

Microsoft has developed and expanded their monopoly by forcing hardware manufacturers to only pre-install Microsoft operating systems on personal computers for years. It is a disgrace that IBM will not pre-load its own superior computer operating system (OS/2) on its own personal computers. Last year during the trial, several major manufacturers had declared they would offer the Linux operating system as a pre-load option. Then it was only to be available on a few models, then only on one or two models, now, after the farce of a settlement outcome of the trial, try and find more than a handful if any among all the major manufacturers. Microsoft can only continue its monopoly by coercion, requiring only its own software on every PC and charging a Microsoft tax on those of us who purchase these systems, but don't want and will not use their products. The only real solution is to make the operating system an option and all systems must be allowed to be sold without an operating system, or with a choice including but not necessarily limited to, OS/2, eComStation Linux, FreeBSD, and Microsoft's current version of WIndows.

Currently on my chosen platform, IBM's OS/2 and Serenity System's eComStation (an OEM version of OS/2), I can get some interchange of documents with Microsoft Word and Excel using Lotus SmartSuite or Star Office, but other formats like PowerPoint and Microsoft Media Player are completely inaccessible. Open formats and APIs can be ported over to non-Microsoft platforms and break Microsoft's stranglehold on the world's information. Making all their proprietary formats and APIs open and freely available will allow those of us who don't use Microsoft products to not be locked out of electronic discourse and electronic media features.

Please stand firm and refuse to give in to the monopolist Microsoft organization.

Mark Dodel

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From the OS/2 Desktop of: Mark Dodel

"The liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the growth of private power to a point where it becomes stronger than their democratic State itself. That in it's essence, is Fascism - ownership of government by an individual, by a group or by any controlling private power." Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Message proposing the Monopoly Investigation, 1938

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